

BEST AVAILABLE COPY**10/803,379****In the claims:**

Claims 1 – 5 (Currently Cancelled)

6. (New) A method for producing oil tempered wire comprising the steps of:

scalping wire material having a controlled nonmetallic inclusion to produce on said wire material a work hardened surface layer;

softening said surface layer by annealing said wire material;

drawing said wire material to form wire material of a predetermined diameter, and

performing an oil temper treatment on said wire material so as to form an oxide scale film on the surface of said wire material.

7. (New) A method according to claim 6 wherein said softening step comprises annealing said wire material in an environmental mixture of nitrogen and oxygen.

8. (New) A method according to claim 7 wherein said annealing step is performed at a temperature of between 500 to 650 degrees Centigrade.

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9. (New) A method according to claim 6 wherein said oil temper treatment comprises the steps of quenching and tempering said wire material to form thereon an oxide scale film having a thickness of between 1 and 5 μm .

10. (New) A method according to claim 9 wherein said softening step comprises annealing said wire material in an environmental mixture of nitrogen and oxygen.

11. (New) A method according to claim 10 wherein said annealing step is performed at a temperature of between 500 to 650 degrees Centigrade.